PAGE 4.

TAM O'SHANTER

AND

SOUTER JOHNNY,

A POEM,

BY

ROBERT BURNS,

ILLUSTRATED BY THOMAS LANDSEER.

"The swats sae ream'd in Tammie's noddle,
Fair play, he car'dna deils a boddle."

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TAM O' SHANTER.

A Tale.

Of Brownyis and of Bogilis full is this Buke.
Gawin Douglas.

When chapman billies leave the street,
And drouthy neebors, neebors meet,
As market-days are wearing late,
An' folk begin to tak the gate;
While we sit bousing at the nappy,
An' getting fou and unco happy,
We thinkna on the lang Scots miles,
The mosses, waters, slaps, and styles,
That lie between us and our hame,
Whare sits our sulky sullen dame,

Gathering her brows like gathering storm,
Nursing her wrath to keep it warm.

This truth fand honest *Tam o' Shanter*,
As he frae Ayr ae night did canter,
(Auld Ayr, wham ne'er a town surpasses
For honest men and bonnie lasses.)

O *Tam!* hadst thou but been sae wise,
As ta'en thy ain wife *Kate's* advice!
She tauld thee weel thou was a skellum,
A blethering, blustering, drunken blellum;
That frae November till October,
Ae market-day thou wasna sober;
That ilka melder, wi' the miller,
Thou sat as lang as thou had siller;
That ev'ry naig was ca'd a shoe on,
The smith and thee gat roaring fou on;
That at the L—d's house, ev'n on Sunday,
Thou drank wi' Kirton Jean till Monday.

She prophesy'd, that late or soon,
Thou would be found deep drown'd in *Doon:*
Or catch'd wi' warlocks in the mirk,
By *Alloway's* auld haunted kirk.

Ah! gentle dames! it gars me greet,
To think how mony counsels sweet,
How mony lengthen'd, sage advices,
The husband frae the wife despises!

But to our tale: Ae market night,
Tam had got planted unco right,
Fast by an ingle, bleezing finely,
Wi' reaming swats, that drank divinely;
And at his elbow, souter *Johnny*,
His ancient, trusty, drouthy crony;
Tam lo'ed him like a vera brither;
They had been fou for weeks thegither.
The night drave on wi' sangs an' clatter;
And aye the ale was growing better:

The landlady and *Tam* grew gracious;
Wi' favours, secret, sweet, and precious:
The souter tauld his queerest stories;
The landlord's laugh was ready chorus:
The storm without might rair and rustle,
Tam didna mind the storm a whistle.

Care, mad to see a man sae happy,
E'en drown'd himsel amang the nappy;
As bees flee hame wi' lades o' treasure,
The minutes wing'd their way wi' pleasure:
Kings may be blest, but *Tam* was glorious,
O'er a' the ills o' life victorious.

But pleasures are like poppies spread,
You seize the flow'r, its bloom is shed;
Or like the snow-falls in the river,
A moment white—then melts for ever;
Or like the borealis race,
That flit ere you can point their place;


J. THOMPSON Sc.

Or like the rainbow's lovely form
Evanishing amid the storm.—
Nae man can tether time or tide—
The hour approaches *Tam* maun ride;
That hour, o' night's black arch the key-stane,
That dreary hour he mounts his beast in;
And sic a night he taks the road in,
As ne'er poor sinner was abroad in.

The wind blew as 'twad blawn its last;
The rattling show'rs rose on the blast;
The speedy gleams the darkness swallow'd;
Loud, deep, and lang, the thunder bellow'd:
That night, a child might understand,
The deil had business on his hand.

Weel mounted on his grey mare, *Meg*,
A better never lifted leg,
Tam skelpit on thro' dub and mire,
Despising wind, and rain, and fire;

Whiles hauding fast his guid blue bonnet;
Whiles crooning o'er some auld Scots sonnet;
Whiles glowring round wi' prudent cares,
Lest bogles catch him unawares;
Kirk-Alloway was drawing nigh,
Whare ghaists and houlets nightly cry.—
By this time he was cross the ford,
Whare in the snaw the chapman smoor'd;
And past the birks and meikle stane,
Whare drunken *Charlie* brak 's neck-bane;
And thro' the whins, and by the cairn,
Whare hunters fand the murder'd bairn;
And near the thorn, aboon the well,
Whare *Mungo's* mither hang'd hersel.—
Before him *Doon* pours all her floods;
The doubling storm roars thro' the woods;
The lightnings flash from pole to pole;
Near and more near the thunders roll;

Le Faucheur
Le Laboureur

When, glimmering thro' the groaning trees,
Kirk-Alloway seem'd in a bleeze;
Thro' ilka bore the beams were glancing;
And loud resounded mirth and dancing.—
Inspiring bold *John Barleycorn!*
What dangers thou canst make us scorn!
Wi' tippenny, we fear nae evil;
Wi' usquebae, we'll face the devil!—
The swats sae ream'd in *Tammie's* noddle,
Fair play, he car'dna deils a boddle.
But *Maggie* stood right sair astonish'd,
Till, by the heel and hand admonish'd,
She ventur'd forward on the light;
And, vow! *Tam* saw an unco sight!
Warlocks and witches in a dance;
Nae cotillion brent new frae *France*,
But hornpipes, jigs, strathspeys, and reels,
Put life and mettle in their heels.

A winnock bunker in the east,
There sat auld Nick, in shape o' beast ;
A towzie tyke, black, grim, and large,
To gie them music was his charge :
He screw'd the pipes and gart them skirl,
Till roof and rafters a' did dirl.—
Coffins stood round like open presses,
That shaw'd the dead in their last dresses ;
And by some devilish cantrip slight,
Each in its cauld hand held a light,—
By which heroic *Tam* was able
To note upon the haly table,
A murderer's banes in gibbet airns ;
Twa span-lang, wee, unchristen'd bairns ;
A thief, new-cutted frae a rape,
Wi' his last gasp his gab did gape ;
Five tomahawks, wi' bluid red rusted ;
Five scimitars, wi' murder crusted ;

A garter, which a babe had strangled;
A knife, a father's throat had mangled,
Whom his ain son o' life bereft,
The gray hairs yet stack to the heft;
Wi' mair o' horrible and awfu',
Which ev'n to name wad be unlawfu'.

As *Tammie* glowr'd, amaz'd, and curious,
The mirth and fun grew fast and furious:
The piper loud and louder blew;
The dancers quick and quicker flew;
They reel'd, they set, they cross'd, they cleekit,
Till ilka carlin swat and reekit,
And coost her duddies to the wark,
And linket at it in her sark!

Now *Tam*, O *Tam!* had they been queans
A' plump and strapping, in their teens;
Their sarks, instead o' creeshie flannen,
Been snaw-white seventeen hunder linen!

Thir breeks o' mine, my only pair,
That ance were plush, o' guid blue hair,
I wad hae gi'en them aff my hurdies,
For ae blink o' the bonnie burdies!

But wither'd beldams, auld and droll,
Rigwiddie hags wad spean a foal,
Lowping an' flinging on a cummock,
I wonder didna turn thy stomach.

But *Tam* kenn'd what was what fu' brawlie,
There was ae winsome wench and walie,
That night inlisted in the core,
(Lang after kenn'd on *Carrick* shore!
For mony a beast to dead she shot,
And perish'd mony a bonnie boat,
And shook baith meikle corn and bear,
And kept the country-side in fear,)
Her cutty sark, o' Paisley harn,
That while a lassie she had worn,


GEO. WILLIAMS &CO

In longitude tho' sorely scanty,
It was her best, and she was vauntie.—
Ah! little kenn'd thy rev'rend grannie,
That sark she coft for her wee *Nannie*,
Wi' twa pund Scots ('twas a' her riches),
Wad ever grac'd a dance of witches!

But here my muse her wing maun cour;
Sic flights are far beyond her pow'r;
To sing how *Nannie* lap and flang,
(A souple jade she was and strang,)
And how *Tam* stood, like ane bewitch'd,
And thought his very een enrich'd;
Even Satan glowr'd, and fidg'd fu' fain,
And hotch'd and blew wi' might and main;
Till first ae caper, syne anither,
Tam tint his reason a' thegither,
And roars out, "Weel done, Cutty-sark!"
And in an instant all was dark:

And scarcely had he *Maggie* rallied,
When out the hellish legion sallied.

As bees bizz out wi' angry fyke,
When plundering herds assail their byke;
As open pussie's mortal foes,
When, pop! she starts before their nose;
As eager runs the market-crowd,
When, "Catch the thief!" resounds aloud;
So *Maggie* runs, the witches follow,
Wi' mony an eldritch skreech and hollow.

Ah, *Tam!* ah, *Tam!* thou'll get thy fairin!
In hell they'll roast thee like a herrin!
In vain thy *Kate* awaits thy comin!
Kate soon will be a woefu' woman!
Now, do thy speedy utmost, *Meg*,
And win the key-stane* o' the brig;

* It is a well-known fact, that witches, or any evil spirits, have no power to follow a poor wight any farther


Sladen

There at them thou thy tail may toss,
A running stream they darena cross.
But ere the key-stane she could make,
The fient a tail she had to shake!
For *Nannie*, far before the rest,
Hard upon noble *Maggie* prest,
And flew at *Tam* wi' furious ettle;
But little wist she *Maggie's* mettle—
Ae spring brought off her master hale,
But left behind her ain gray tail:
The carlin claught her by the rump,
And left poor *Maggie* scarce a stump.

---

than the middle of the next running stream.—It may be proper likewise to mention to the benighted traveller, that when he falls in with *bogles*, whatever danger may be in his going forward, there is much more hazard in turning back.

Now, wha this tale o' truth shall read,
Ilk man and mother's son, tak heed:
Whene'er to drink you are inclin'd,
Or cutty-sarks run in your mind,
Think, ye may buy the joys owre dear,
Remember *Tam o' Shanter's* mare.

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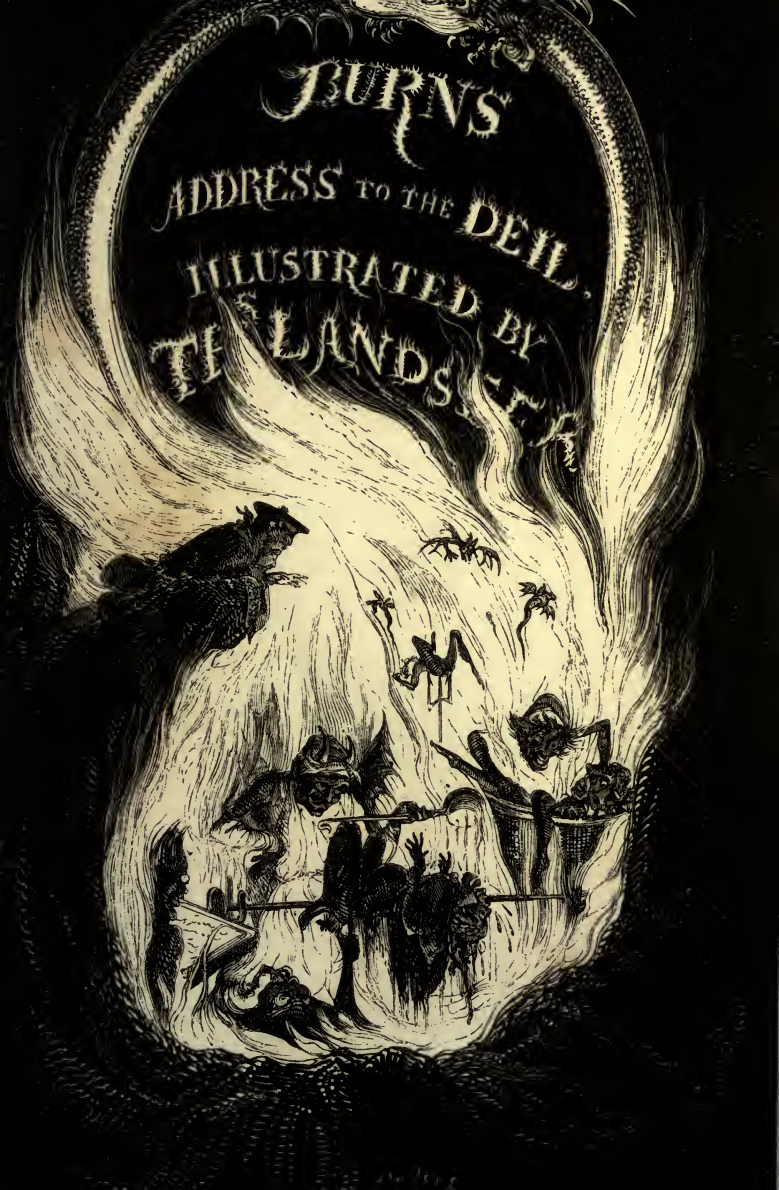
Dorset Street, Fleet Street.


BURNS
ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.
ILLUSTRATED BY


BURNS
ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.
ILLUSTRATED BY

AN

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL,

BY ROBERT BURNS;

WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES.

ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD,

AFTER DESIGNS BY

THOMAS LANDSEER.

LONDON:

WILLIAM KIDD, 6, OLD BOND STREET.

MDCCCXXX.

Note.

SINCE an "Address to the Deil" must have a 'head-piece,' as it is technically termed, our artist asked "what better *head-piece* than a *crown?*" and he has accordingly favored the world with a sketch (the only authentic one) of the Satanic crown, studded like Milton's Pandemonium, with

> "a row
> Of starry lamps and blazing cressets, fed
> With naphtha and asphaltus,"——

and glaring from the "palpable obscure" upon which it is relieved, like some portentous meteor in a midnight storm. The sceptre, too, we have been assured,—and in these days of exclusive pretension it is a fact to be insisted upon,—is the only "genuine delineation" of that symbol of infernal power, which the "intrepid fiend" extends, according to the poets, over the bottomless abyss.

GILBERT BURNS says, "It was, I think, in the winter of 1784, as we were going together with carts for coals to the family, and I could yet point out the particular spot, that the author first repeated to me the *Address to the Deil*. The idea of such an address was suggested to him by running over in his mind the many ludicrous accounts and representations of this august personage."

Pickering's Aldine Edition of Burns, vol. i. p. 57.


ADDRESS,


THE END
ADDRESS
THE DEIL

O Prince! O chief of many thron'd pow'rs
That led th' embattled Seraphim to war.—MILTON.

ADDRESS TO THE DEIL.

I.

O THOU! whatever title suit thee,
Auld Hornie, Satan, Nick, or Clootie,
Wha in yon cavern grim an' sootie,
Closed under hatches,
Spairges about the brunstane cootie,
To scaud poor wretches!

II.

Hear me, auld Hangie, for a wee,
An' let poor damned bodies be;
I'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,
E'en to a Deil,
To skelp and scaud poor dogs like me,
An' hear us squeel!

Notes.

STANZAS I. II.—" Closed under hatches" though " Auld Hornie" be,—Burns, like Orpheus or Theseus of old, must have evidently penetrated into the very recesses of his infernal kingdom; and to the fortunate event of our Poet's returning alive into the cool air of Ayrshire, to remonstrate with the grim monarch whose domestic policy he had been considering, we owe those touches of occupation and character which Mr. Landseer has worked up into the preceding sketch. We cannot undertake to say whether or not " Auld Hornie" be a portrait; but the brimstone ladle is wielded by him with such an air, and the " cavern grim and sootie," is glowing with such a light, that we have no more doubt of the identity of the person or the place, than seems to possess the mortal *supervisor*, who looks down from his rocky shelf upon the fearful business of the infernal kitchen, under much the same feeling with which a spring chicken, rescued from the knife and perched in some secure concealment, would probably regard a score or two of his brethren roasting below, under the scientific direction of M. Ude, amidst the ominous steam of asparagus and mushrooms.

III.

Great is thy pow'r an' great thy fame;
Far kend and noted is thy name;
An' tho' yon lowin heugh's thy hame,
Thou travels far;
An' faith! thou's neither lag nor lame,
Nor blate nor scaur.

Notes.

STANZAS III. IV.—This stanza and the following are not the only ones of the poem in which Burns has contrived to blend severe moral truths with glimpses of local scenery, and snatches of careless merriment. The Archfiend has long since attained the reputation of ubiquity. He surely "travels far," and can be neither bashful nor timorous, neither halt nor tardy,—to whom almost all nations, in all ages, have ascribed rapidity of locomotion that has mocked the lightning, and a boldness of intrusion which respects neither place nor season; and a perseverance in importunity, which is insensible to denial or disgust. This importunity and intrusion form the stock capital of the German romance writers and dramatists. With them "Auld Hangie" is a personage who will not be denied; who haunts his victim, not only in the closet and the cloister, but pursues him into the public streets; and, like Mephistophiles, is so bent on rendering himself useful, that, rather than lose a *pigeon*, he will be his second in a midnight brawl, or his companion in a ride to———the other world. It seems an established canon of this school of writers, that the tempted object must always be the fated one; and he is usually represented

IV.

Whyles, ranging like a roarin lion,
For prey, a' holes an' corners tryin;
Whyles on the strong-wing'd tempest flyin,
Tirling the kirks;
Whyles, in the human bosom pryin,
Unseen thou lurks.

Notes.

as beset,—whether among his books, or his bottles, or his friends,—by a fiend who is reasonably enough denominated "a familiar;" and whom, being like Shakspeare's spirit, "a spirit of hell," the victim not less reasonably considers a "*d—d*" familiar one. By him the wretch is harassed, until, in despair of all relief from priests or policemen, and in order to escape the bore of a persecution already become a *devil of a bore*, he at last resigns himself to voluntary perdition, and drops, fascinated, into the toils, like a bird into the jaws of a serpent.

Let none object to the multitudinous occupations which Burns has assigned, at one and the same time, to the "Deil," as an overstrained hypothesis, stated with metaphorical exaggeration. Look at the strange delusions of half the world upon this subject. The Laplanders, and some tribes of the Esquimaux, persuade themselves that they can evoke him from his "lowin heugh" by beating a drum; the Indians of North America converse with him in the tops of lofty trees: the South Sea islanders compel his presence by libations of *toddy;* the Caffres by smoking *bang;* the Jugglers of Hindustan by swallowing opium; and in all cases, the charm seems incomplete

ST. V

ST. V.

v.

I've heard my reverend Grannie say,
In lanely glens ye like to stray;
Or where auld-ruin'd castles, gray,
Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wand'rer's way,
Wi' eldritch croon.

Notes.

without a dance—(to the air, probably, of "the Devil to pay"). Now this personal appearance, to summonses from all or any parts of the world, in the smallest imaginable space of time, is indeed to

"Survey mankind from China to Peru,"

with a facility of which the poet, who imposed the task of that survey on his friend, never dreamed. How, in addition to this velocity of movement, the "roarin lion" manages to appear at the same moment of time to twenty different votaries in twenty different regions of the globe, we pause not to conjecture.

May we entreat the Southron reader, who has hitherto been deterred from perusing the poetry of Burns, by his provincialisms, to consider the powerful strain of true poetry, which pervades this fourth stanza.

Stanza v.—This stanza is picturesque and full of interest. The variety of the detail is in good keeping with that garrulous minuteness which is the universal privilege of grandmothers. Would that all reverend "grannies" were, moreover, as poetical in their relations as this lady;

VI.

When twilight did my Grannie summon
To say her prayers, douce, honest woman;
Aft yont the dyke she's heard you bummin,
Wi' eerie drone;
Or, rustlin, thro' the boortries comin,
Wi' heavy groan.

Notes.

for it were no bad exchange for the rising generation, upon which devolves the duty of *listening*, to relinquish the devouring sorrows of Little Red Riding Hood, for stories of lonely glens and ruined towers, mysterious moanings and affrighted travellers.

It is at this part of the Address that we begin to recognise the master hand with which Burns has touched the scenery of the Highlands, the moors, and lochs, and mountains. The wild and lonely places, the unearthly noises, the bewildering mists, the yet more deceptive "wild fires dancing o'er the heath;" all of these are etchings, light, indeed, but touched with the fidelity of a keen and minute observer of nature.

STANZAS VI. VII. VIII.—Burns may have been but little versed in the philosophy of life; many well disposed persons are fond of citing his case as one of the thousand, in which the ablest men of genius have shown themselves the most untutored men of the world. The fact may be so: but we are confident that our Poet perfectly understood much of the philosophy of mind. In these stanzas, he has touched, with a nice and accurate

ST. VII. VIII.

ST. VII. VIII.

VII.

Ae dreary, windy, winter night,
The stars shot down wi' sklentin light,
Wi' you, mysel, I gat a fright,
Ayont the lough ;
Ye, like a rash-bush, stood in sight,
Wi' waving sugh.

Notes.

pencil, one of those foibles common to our moral nature, which require the most delicate handling. He intimates, with mingled archness and simplicity, that the good old woman never suspected that the noises which she heard, MIGHT be that hum of insects which she *thought* it so much resembled, above the waters of the loch,—or the motion of a frightened bird whirring through the elder bushes. This propensity to attribute natural effects to supernatural causes, is one of the best known and least intelligible phænomena of the human mind. We are always rejecting the evidence of our senses, to tamper with the imaginary evidence supplied by analogous reasoning upon mere abstract principles. The good wife never dreamed of referring her alarms to the natural objects around her. A humming drone, at twilight, by the waters, a rustling in the leaves of the trees about her cot-

VIII.

The cudgel in my nieve did shake,
Each bristl'd hair stood like a stake,
When wi' an eldritch stour, quaick—quaick—
Amang the springs,
Awa ye squatter'd like a drake,
On whistling wings.

Notes.

tage—if these did not bespeak the presence of the Devil, what the d—l else could they indicate?

Thus our Poet proceeds to tell us, that beyond the same loch, he himself had had a visible encounter with something, LIKE, indeed, to a *bush of rushes*, waving and shaking in the wind; and after an admirable description of the emotions of fear by which he was oppressed, he incidentally mentions that the Great Unknown did, certainly, with an abrupt and hasty flight take away like a drake; but even the appropriate note of the fluttering fowl never once awakened his suspicion, that it might be a fowl proper, and not the foul fiend!

A London volunteer, suddenly apprized that he is called into active service forthwith, on a foreign station, —Sierra Leone, for example,—could scarcely look more agreeably astonished than the hero of our drawing.

ST. IX.

ST. IX.

IX.

Let warlocks grim, an' wither'd hags,
Tell how wi' you on ragweed nags,
They skim the muirs, an' dizzy crags,
Wi' wicked speed;
And in kirk-yards renew their leagues,
Owre howkit dead.

Notes.

STANZA IX.—The wood cut will speak more powerfully for itself, than any eulogy which we may be inclined to pass upon it. The horse seems to shoot along, swift and uncontrolable as a meteor; and the wild demon who bestrides him, and the hag, his hideous companion, and the "delicate spirit" condemned to do their unholy bidding, remind one of the damned souls whom Shakespeare speaks of, as

> ——— "Imprisoned in the viewless winds,
> And blown with restless violence round about
> The pendent world."

There is an energy in the action of the animal, and an expression in the attitude of its riders, malevolent, determined, and exulting.

x.

Thence countra wives, wi' toil an' pain,
May plunge an' plunge the kirn in vain;
For, oh! the yellow treasure's taen
By witching skill,
An' dawtit, twal-pint Hawkie's gaen
As yell's the bill.

Notes.

STANZA x.—We have already spoken of the Devil's ubiquity. We are here reminded that he is not the Bottle Imp of the old novelists, but *proh pudor!* the imp of a butter-churn! Of all the *imp*utations on "Auld Hangie," this seems the most unkind! To think that he should have lived to be suspected of this species of rural petty larceny! And the charge against him is at least as old as the time of Virgil, and probably as much older as the first century or two after the Scythians became a pastoral people. Any body who would know to what extent their descendants, the modern Tatars, carry this and other similar prejudices, may consult Von Strahlenberg's Book, on of Russia.

XI.

Thence mystic knots mak great abuse,
On young Guidman, fond, keen an' crouse;
When the best wark-lume i' the house,
By cantrip wit,
Is instant made no worth a louse,
Just at the bit.

Notes.

STANZA XI.—It being impossible that, with a due regard to the dignity of our subject,—an address to no less a person than the great *Overseer* of *Lincoln*,—we should pause to expatiate on so unpoetical a catastrophe as the derangement of a weaver's machinery, or to deplore the Bœotian simile with which the stanza concludes; we proceed, after the manner of the most approved authorities, to subjoin a commentary which has absolutely nothing at all to do with the text. The "Bottle Imp" has been idly considered, by many intelligent lovers of tales of wonder, a "*perfect*" horror in its way. To show them how much their good-nature has overrated its real merits, we refer them to an account of the Malay Dugong—the Bottle Imp of the Eastern Archipelago, especially of Java—as a demon of far more terrible aspect and properties. They may readily make his acquaintance by the perusal of Sir Stamford Raffles's History.

XII.

When thowes dissolve the snawy hoord,
An' float the jinglin icy-boord,
Then Water-kelpies haunt the foord,
By your direction,
An' nighted Trav'llers are allur'd
To their destruction.

Notes.

STANZA XII.—The disruption occasioned by a thaw, and the noise of the fragments of ice sliding over one another, are happily described here. No opportunity seems more fitting for the intervention of the mischievous Kelpies, whom our northern superstitions imagine to be delighted with the last agonies of drowning men and despairing mariners, than the uproar of waters and icy masses, the tides, and the winds, all in angry collision, and the raging of the elements outroaring the delirious cries of human terror. It is not twenty years since the piercing shrieks and supplications for help, of a passage-boat's company, which had been landed on a sandbank, at low water, in the Solway Frith, instead of on the Cumberland coast; and who found, as the moon rose and the haze dispersed, that they were in mid channel, with a strong tide setting fast in upon them, were mistaken by the people, both on the Scotch and English shores, for the wailings of Kelpies! The consequence was, that the unhappy people (whose boat had drifted from them before their fatal error was discovered) were all drowned; though nothing had been easier, but for the rooted superstition of their neighbours ashore, than to have effectually succoured them.


SLADER


SLADER

XIII.

An' aft your moss-traversing Spunkies
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is:
The bleezin, curst, mischievous monkeys
Delude his eyes,
Till in some miry slough he sunk is,
Ne'er mair to rise.

Notes.

STANZA XIII.—It may be in drunkenness, as it is said to be in madness; that there are pleasures in that condition of excitement, which none but those who have experienced them can rightly appreciate. If the wandering gentleman in the above etching may be deemed authority on this point (and he seems decidedly one of the *initiated*, for he is knee deep), the fact is so. Neither the cold bath, extempore, into which he has been betrayed in his night journey over the moor, nor the unearthly mockery of the "curst mischievous monkeys," who have seduced him from the right path, appear to be capable of disturbing his good-humoured equanimity. He is evidently bent, not upon destroying himself, but on his own destruction; for he is in that stage of expostulating garrulity, and withal is so amiably indifferent to personal consequences, that he would follow into the deepest slough, or ugliest mire, with his eyes open,—if he could but keep them in that sober position,—even a Kelpie or a Warlock, to ask the one to take "a wee drap," or to remonstrate with the other on the disreputable practice of keeping

XIV.

When Masons' mystic word an' grip
In storms an' tempests raise you up,
Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,
Or, strange to tell!
The youngest brother ye wad whip
Aff straught to hell!

Notes.

late hours. But because our English proverb requires that we should "give his due," even to the very unpopular personage to whom Burns has inscribed this poem, we are bound to remark that "the moss-traversing Spunkies" are not alone responsible for this wight's "deluded eyes;" and our friend, Mr. Landseer, has insinuated into their sleepy satisfied expression, an acknowledgment that during the last five hours of this night's booze, the man had found, like Tam O'Shanter, that

"Ay the ale was getting better."

And under this influence he feels not the slightest alarm, that, like Mr. Braham towards the end of an oratorio, he is going on to "deeper and deeper still."

STANZA XIV.—It is said to be dangerous to cut jokes upon the mystery of Freemasonry; some punishment certainly following any indiscreet levity of this kind, into which the uninitiated may, at any time, have been betrayed. The independence of our Poet respected these

Thos. Williams, Sc.

Thos. Williams, Sc.

XV.

Lang syne, in Eden's bonnie yard,
When youthfu' lovers first were pair'd
An' a' the soul of love they shar'd
The raptur'd hour,
Sweet on the fragrant, flow'ry swaird,
In shady bow'r:

Notes.

observances no more than he did the pride of place, or the accidents of station and birth.

We are of the uninitiated, *quoàd* the noble mystery aforesaid; but, in our simplicity, venture to suggest that the *actual cautery*, which is vulgarly supposed to constitute the probation of every masonic novice, may have been originally decreed by the founders of the sect, to prepare any younger brothers who might thus be "whipt aff straught to h—ll," for the severer combustion they would have to undergo there. Upon the whole it might be well that apprentice masons should never attend a lodge without taking the precaution of clothing themselves in the Chevalier Aldini's metallic gauzes.

STANZAS XV. XVI.—In these stanzas, the transition is so startling, and yet so beautiful, that we are reminded of those early Italian poets who delighted themselves and their readers by abrupt and striking alternations from the burlesque to the pathetic; from the heroic to the humorous; and the Ayrshire Bard has the decided advantage

XVI.

Then you, ye auld snic-drawing dog!
Ye came to Paradise incog.
An' play'd on man a cursed brogue,
(Black be your fa!)
An' gied the infant warld a shog,
'Maist ruin'd a'.

Notes.

of accomplishing the same end with less apparent effort and premeditation, than his gifted predecessors.

To our Southern ears and prejudices, the location of the first man and his beautiful companion, may sound somewhat homely and even coarse; but it is to be observed, that, in the dialect which Burns employed, "*Eden's bonnie yard,*" has a more extended and comely sense than that which it bears in the language of OUR farming economy. But is it possible to condense within the compass of four or five lines a more charming sketch of an infant world, a newly created race of beings, a state of existence serene, blissful, and contented; a condition of society unalloyed by vice or misery, want, or pain? And with how much effect does the delicious repose of this picture prepare us for the fatal reverse, which follows by the introduction of the fell destroyer, who "maist ruin'd a'."

Where the subject is felt so deeply, it is almost difficult to deprecate the tone, somewhat too light, in which the Poet has chosen to treat it.


SLATER

ST. XVII.

XVII.

D'ye mind that day, when in a bizz,
Wi' reekit duds, an' reestit gizz,
Ye did present your smoutie phiz
'Mang better fo'k,
An' sklented on the man of Uzz
Your spitefu' joke.

Notes.

STANZAS XVII. XVIII.—The artist has certainly done much, in our opinion, to identify the "smoutie phiz" of the Prince of Darkness. The taunting, laughing, urgent, maddening tempter thus depicted, like vice in all its natural deformity, "to be hated needs but to be seen." His savage joy at the desolation which has overtaken the fortunes of Job, contrasts finely with the resignation of the aged sufferer, whose faith remains unshaken by all that calamity and disease, the loss of his children, the destruction of his home, the ruin of his herds, and his substance, the angry imprecations of his "ill-tongued wicked scawl," and the pangs of bodily pain can inflict upon him.

XVIII.

An' how ye gat him i' your thrall,
An' brak him out o' house an' hall,
While scabs and blotches did him gall,
Wi' bitter claw,
An' lows'd his ill-tongu'd, wicked scawl,
Was warst ava ?

Notes.

Venerable in misfortune, the unsubdued spirit of Job seems rather to contemplate new sources of hope and consolation, within his own bosom, than to repine at his wasted limbs and blighted greatness; while his majestic beard, alone, seems to have escaped the ravages of that wasting scourge which has visited his house and his grandeur.

We had not thought it possible to exhibit one of the softer sex in so unamiable a light, as that in which she here appears; but we can now understand, looking at her relative position and occupation in the drawing, that a "scolding wife" is indeed "a *match* for the Deil."

XIX.

But a' your doings to rehearse,
Your wily snares an' fechtin fierce,
Sin' that day Michael* did you pierce,
Down to this time,
Wad ding a' Lallan tongue, or Erse,
In prose or rhyme.

Notes.

STANZA XIX. — If we might fairly expect that the catalogue of all the Devil's doings, subsequent to the affair hinted at in the text, could have been continued with equal fidelity and spirit, we might have regretted that this Address was not prolonged accordingly. But Burns has evidently formed a just estimate of the length and difficulty of such an undertaking:—and only think to what an extent must our commentary have run! The reader may congratulate himself that things are as they are. He ought to turn *optimist*, and acknowledge that "all is for the best."

* Vide Milton, book vi.

XX.

An' now, auld Cloots, I ken ye're thinkin,
A certain Bardie's rantin, drinkin,
Some luckless hour will send him linkin,
To your black pit;
But faith! he'll turn a corner jinkin,
An' cheat you yet.

Notes.

STANZA XX.—This is, at least, to give the most cunning of fiends fair warning! It is fairly challenging the great shadow-catcher, and bidding him do his worst. The candour of the Poet's declaration, that before "Auld Nickie Ben" can catch *him*, he will dodge him round a corner and deceive his expectation, is as amiable as it is whimsical. Such a man must have felt himself very much at ease, in the consciousness of a power thus to defy the grand foe of our species; and that consciousness bespeaks an honest heart, and a generous confidence in the rectitude of its intentions.

XXI.

But, fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben!
O wad ye tak a thought an' men'!
Ye aiblins might—I dinna ken—
Still hae a stake—
I'm wae to think upo' yon den,
Ev'n for your sake!

Notes.

STANZA XXI.—About this parting admonition there is a touch of human pity, which was, evidently, the spontaneous ebullition, perhaps the unconscious one, of a kind and sympathising nature; for precisely such a natuie was Burns's. The exhortation to amendment, the suggestion of a happier fate as the reward of that amendment, and the commiseration expressed for the Arch-enemy of man, present, in this stanza, a moral lesson which would not have disgraced a graver preacher, a holier theme, or a more solemn occasion. We could say more; but that here

THE " TAIL" ENDS.

C. Whittingham, 21, Tooks Court,
Chancery Lane, London.

THE

BEGGAR'S DAUGHTER

OF

BEDNALL GREEN.

HARVEY, DEL. JACKSON, SC.

To church then went this gallant younge knight;
His bride followed after, an angell most bright.

THE

BEGGAR'S DAUGHTER

OF BEDNALL GREEN,

AS

EDITED BY DR. PERCY.

WITH AN ORIGINAL PREFACE.

ILLUSTRATED WITH ENGRAVINGS ON WOOD,

Executed by, and under the Superintendence of, BRANSTON AND WRIGHT,

FROM DESIGNS BY HARVEY.

LONDON:

JENNINGS AND CHAPLIN.

MDCCCXXXII.

1832

VIZETELLY, BRANSTON AND CO. PRINTERS,
FLEET STREET.

PREFACE.

DR. PERCY'S version of *The Beggar's Daughter of Bednall Green*, is selected for reprinting in this form, from respect to the literary eminence of its amiable editor. It appears in the same style of elegance with the publishers' recent edition of *The Children in the Wood*, and with embellishments by the same artists. These decorations may be said, in common language, to speak for themselves.

A few remarks are ventured upon the story, which this version of the ballad connects with the enterprise of the barons under Simon de Montfort, the great Earl of Leicester, against Henry III. whom they took prisoner at the battle of Lewes, on the 14th of May, 1264, and held in duress until the decisive battle of Evesham, on the 4th of August, 1265, when the Earl of Leicester was killed, with his eldest son, Henry; and the fortunes of the house of De Montfort perished.

The present version of *The Beggar's Daughter of Bednall Green*, makes the Beggar declare himself to be Henry de Montfort, the eldest son of Simon, Earl of Leicester. He relates, that, having fallen in the battle of Evesham, from a blow, which deprived him of sight, he lay among the dead. But a baron's daughter, searching for her slain father's body, on the evening of the next day, led him blind from the fatal field, nursed him in secret, became his bride, and

"made him glad father of prettye Bessee."

She sold her jewels, and then, in beggar's attire, they came to Bethnal Green; where they remained concealed, until, at the marriage of "a gallant yong knight" with "prettye Bessee," the "seely Blind Beggar" surprised the wedding guests with the secret of his nobility.

The stanzas of the Beggar's story, in this version, were communicated to Dr. Percy, in manuscript; "but he will not answer for their being genuine: he rather thinks them the modern production of some person who was offended at the absurdities and inconsistencies which so remarkably prevailed in this part of the song, as it stood before; whereas, by the alteration of a few lines, the story is rendered much more affecting, and is reconciled to probability and true history." It must, however, be remarked, that the alteration extends further than Dr. Percy intimates. The modern stanzas are eight in number: they displace six of the old stanzas, transform the Beggar into an historical per-

sonage, and lower the romance of the ballad, which affords no pretence for laying the scene at the battle of Evesham, or making the Beggar the heir of Simon de Montfort. These essential variations were obviously suggested by some judicious observations, which preface the original song, as it stands printed, in "A Collection of Old Ballads, London, 1726:" 3 vols. 12mo. The writer of the preface, who is wholly unnoticed by Dr. Percy, says, "I would not place the following song amongst my Historical Ballads, there not being the least probability of truth in it, and the history on which it is founded no where to be met with but in the records of Moorfields; and yet I have heard critics, in this kind of history, differ about several of the circumstances; and once, a warm dispute between two of 'em, which ended in a wager, whether Montfort, the heroe of this song, liv'd under the reign of Henry II. or Henry III.—"

The stanzas excluded by Dr. Percy supply indubitable evidence, that the Beggar lost his sight in a battle fought abroad, three centuries after the reign of Henry III.; and the Doctor himself concludes, that the ballad was not written until the reign of Elizabeth, because, in the eighth stanza, the arms of England are called the "Queene's arms." That it is not of earlier date than the reign of Henry VIII., and that the story of the ballad relates to events in that late reign, may be proved, from a stanza displaced by Dr. Percy; in which the Beggar relates, that he lost his sight in a foreign battle:—

" When first our king his fame did advance,
And fought for his title in delicate France,
In many places great peril past he,
But then was not born my pretty Bessee."

Now this, " our king," could not be Henry III. who neither claimed title, nor made war in that country. The lines clearly refer to Henry VIII. in whom, at the commencement of his reign, hopes had been excited, by Pope Julius II., that the title of Most Christian King, annexed to the crown of France, would be transferred to the crown of England. Under that persuasion, and reviving some old pretensions to possessions in that country, Henry VIII. raised a large army, and " fought for his title in delicate France."

" And in those wars went over to fight
Many a brave duke, a lord, and a knight:
And with them young Montfort, of courage so free,
But then was not born my pretty Bessee.

And there did young Montfort, with a blow o' th' face
Lose both his eyes, in a very short space;
His life, also, had been gone with his sight,
Had not a young woman come forth in the night.

Amongst the slain men, her fancy doth move,
To search and to seek for her own true love;
Who seeing young Montfort there gasping to die,
She saved his life through her charity.

And then all our victuals, in beggar's attire,
At the hands of good people we then did require;
At last into England, as now it is seen,
We came, and remained at Bednall Green.

And thus we have lived, in fortune's despight,
Though poor, yet contented, with humble delight;
And in my old years, a comfort to be,
God sent me a daughter, called pretty Bessee."

Such is the Blind Beggar's story of his adventures in the original ballad, which Webster Puttenham, in the reign of Elizabeth, would have ranked among the "small and popular songs, sung by those *cantabanqui*, upon benches and barrels' heads, where they have no other audience than boys, or country fellows, that pass by them in the street; or else by blind harpers, or such like tavern minstrels, that give a *fit* of mirth for a groat."

There is a saying among country-people, that many insects in spring is a sign of many birds in summer. Begging keeps pace, or slackens, with the disposition to give, or withhold, alms. In a former age, the rich dispensed liberally to the poor, and poverty itself could afford to relieve indigence. Then, beggar joined company with beggar, and troops of mendicants, swarming from towns, overspread the country, and fattened on gleanings which, in the midst of plenty, were scarcely missed. The demands outgrew the supplies. So early as the reign of Henry VII., there is a statute directing that every impotent beggar should resort to the hundred where he last dwelt, was best known, or was born, and there remain, upon pain of being set in the stocks for three days and nights, with only bread and water, and then sent out of the town. In the next reign, when Henry VIII. dissolved the monasteries and nunneries "with good incomes and warm kitchens," whence provisions were daily distributed to the needy, the helpless poor wandered far and wide, and so troubled the kingdom for sustenance, that parliament authorised the

justices of every county to grant licenses to indigent, aged, and impotent beggars, to beg within a certain district. At that time, Bethnal Green, which is now a parish of itself, formed a part of the large and ancient parish of Stepney, and the helpless part of the population resorted daily, for alms, to the many religious establishments in the parish and its neighbourhood. In Holywell Lane abode the Benedictine Nuns, in their priory of St. John the Baptist, re-edified in the reign of Henry VII., by Sir Thomas Lovell, whose bounty they were required to remember in their devotions by the following lines, painted on the windows :—

> "All the nuns of Holywell
> Pray for the soul of Thomas Lovell."

Then, also, was standing the munificent hospital called St. Mary's Spital, whence the ground belonging to it, and adjoining Bethnal Green, was called Spital-fields, a site long since covered with houses, now mostly inhabited by descendants of a multitude of French Protestants, who fled from the persecution consequent upon the revocation of the edict of Nantz, and established the silk manufacture upon this spot of refuge. And, doubtless, in the time spoken of, the necessitous of Bethnal Green made pleasant summer strolls to the monastery at West Ham, on their way to Barking Abbey, where all who asked, received liberal alms from the sisters of that magnificent foundation. At the Reformation, these sources of charity were dried up, and the indigent poor of Bethnal Green, and the

neighbourhood, with all the equally poor people of the kingdom, became common beggars.

In the district of Bethnal Green, however, there were spacious mansions, in which resided opulent gentry and some of the nobility. The old Roman road from London led over the Green, and being joined by the military way from the west, passed by Old Ford to Lea Ferry, across which river was built the first stone bridge erected in England, still celebrated by children, unconsciously, in their sports, with the verses of an ancient song, beginning,—

> "London Bridge is broken down,
> Dance over Lady Lea."

Upon Bethnal Green there yet linger certain indications of departed greatness and obsolete taste. Strong iron gates, of various sizes, and of different and curious open patterns, hang upon square massive columns of stone-capped brick-work, and enclose formal fore-courts of diversely-built, remarkable looking edifices. Here and there, large ancient elms edge the foot-path, and, with wide-spreading branches, canopy the passenger. In other parts there are lime-trees, with their branches carefully cut down, and adjusted, by topiary art, into lines of arches. A large mansion, built in the reign of Elizabeth, called, in the deeds of the estate, Kirby Castle, has been long devoted to the care of patients labouring under mental infirmity. It was formerly kept by Mr. Talbot, who is now retired, far advanced in years, and who recently related to the writer a pleasantry

worth preserving. One morning, when Mr. Talbot resided here, he stood at the gate and observed a curricle approaching with two dashing young men. It slackened pace, and one of them said to the other, "I'll quiz this old buck.—Pray, old gentleman, do you receive lunatics here?" "I do." "Well, then, I suppose you would not object to take me in?" "I should." "Why?" "Because we cannot take in born-idiots." The management of this establishment has lately devolved to Mr. Beverley, surgeon with the late expedition to the North Pole under Captain Ross. In the course of various repairs, there have been discovered, in different parts of the edifice, spacious baths, painted wainscots, rich gilding, and finely carved stone-work, mostly decayed or mutilated, hidden by former alterations, and all again covered up, or buried. On traditional authority, this house is called, by many old inhabitants adjacent, the Blind Beggar's Palace.

At Bethnal Green and in the neighbourhood is a dense population. Some among the elderly, descended from residents of ancient date, love to tell of the manners of their earlier ancestors, who appear to have been great seers of sights, and lovers of the marvellous, and to have implicitly believed the story of the Blind Beggar and his Daughter. They were constant frequenters of the shootings in the old archery grounds of Finsbury, and attendants upon the archers' processions under the Marquis of Islington and the Earl of Pancridge, titles of honour conferred by Henry VIII. upon inhabitants of those places for their dexterity, at

a great shooting, at Windsor. Many of the present inhabitants retain something of this lounging character. They used to dawdle away much time in admiration of the great field-days, and counter-marchings of the City Volunteers; but since the disbanding of those regiments, they content themselves with, now and then, taking a look at the holiday exercising of the East India Company's porters in full uniform. They are given to bird-fancying, and pigeon-flying, and the keeping of little gardens in trim order. Fortune-tellers are much in vogue with them; and, on winter evenings, they congregate about haunted houses, and tell each other wonderful stories of apparitions and evil spirits. They relate, that, at Bonner's Green, which is in the neighbourhood, every year, on a certain night, when the clock strikes twelve, the ghost of Bishop Bonner appears, in a black coach, and drives three times round the Green; and, they say, that any person who sees this will die. Finally, they believe that every word in the ballad of the *Beggar's Daughter of Bednall Green* is true; and if you doubt the tale, they prove it, by pointing to the Beggar's Palace, and to the sign of the "Blind Beggar," at an adjacent public-house; and ask, if it were not true, whether you think the clergyman of the parish would let the Beggar's image be upon the beadles' staves.

Dr. Percy was assured, by an "ingenious gentleman," that he had formerly seen another old song on the same subject, composed in a different measure.

One stanza, quoted by the Doctor, as being the only one remembered by the "ingenious gentleman," is highly poetical. It says of the Blind Beggar, that

—— "down his neck his reverend lockes
In comelye curls did wave;
And on his aged temples grewe
The blossomes of the grave."

Whether this beautiful stanza existed many hours before it was "remembered," may be questioned. In favour of the original ballad may be urged this fact, that it is still "a ballad in print"—a penny favourite with all true lovers of "doleful matter, merrily set down; or a very pleasant story sung lamentably."

The ballad-story has been twice dramatized: first, in a play called *The Blind Beggar of Bednall Green*, by John Day, 1659, quarto; and next, by "the ingenious Dodsley."

THE

BEGGAR'S DAUGHTER

OF

BEDNALL GREEN.

Part the First.

ITT was a blind beggar, had long lost his sight,
He had a faire daughter of bewtye most bright;
And many a gallant brave suiter had shee,
For none was soe comelye as prettye Bessee.

And though shee was of favor most faire,
Yett seeing shee was but a blinde beggars heyre,
Of ancyent housekeepers despised was shee,
Whose sonnes came as suitors to prettye Bessee.

Wherefôre in great sorrow faire Bessy did say,
" Good father, and mother, let me goe away
To seeke out my fortune, whatever itt bee."
Her suite then they granted to prettye Bessee.

Then Bessy, that was of bewtye soe bright,
All cladd in gray russett, and late in the night,
From father and mother alone parted shee;
Who sighed and sobbed for prettye Bessee.

Shee went till shee came to Stratford-le-Bowe;
Then knew shee not, whither nor which way to goe:
With teares shee lamented her hard destinìe,
Soe sadd and soe heavy was prettye Bessee.

Shee kept on her journey untill it was day,
And went unto Rumford along the hye way;
Where at the Queenes armes entertained was shee;
Soe faire and wel favoured was prettye Bessee.

HARVEY, DEL. BRANSTON AND WRIGHT.

From father and mother alone parted shee;
Who sighed and sobbed for prettye Bessee.

Shee had not beene there a month to an end,
But master and mistres and all was her friend:
And every brave gallant, that once did her see,
Was straight-way enamourd of prettye Bessee.

Great gifts they did send her of silver and gold,
And in their songs daylye her love was extold;
Her bewtye was blazed in every degree;
Soe faire and soe comelye was prettye Bessee.

The yong men of Rumford in her had their joy;
Shee shewd herselfe curteous, and modestlye coye;
And at her commandment still wold they bee;
Soe fayre and soe comlye was prettye Bessee.

Foure suitors att once unto her did goe;
They craved her favor, but still shee sayd "Noe;
I wold not wish gentles to marry with mee."
Yett ever they honoured prettye Bessee.

The first of them was a gallant yong knight,
And he came unto her disguisde in the night:
The second a gentleman of good degree,
Who wooed and sued for prettye Bessee.

A merchant of London, whose wealth was not small,
He was the third suiter, and proper withall:
Her masters own sonne the fourth man must bee,
Who swore he wold dye for prettye Bessee.

"And, if thou wilt marry with mee," quoth the knight,
"Ile make thee a ladye with joy and delight:
My hart's so inthralled by thy bewtie,
That soone I shall dye for prettye Bessee."

The gentleman sayd, "Come, marry with mee,
As fine as a ladye my Bessy shal bee:
My life is distressed: O heare me," quoth hee;
"And grant me thy love, my prettye Bessee."

"Let me bee thy husband," the merchant could say,
"Thou shalt live in London both gallant and gay;
My shippes shall bring home rych jewells for thee,
And I will for ever love prettye Bessee."

Then Bessy shee sighed, and thus shee did say,
"My father and mother I meane to obey;
First gett their good will, and be faithfull to mee,
And you shall enjoye your prettye Bessee."

HARVEY, DEL. NESBIT, SC.

Foure suitors att once unto her did goe;
They craved her favor, but still she sayd noe.

To every one this answer shee made,
Wherfore unto her they joyfullye sayd,
"This thing to fulfill wee all doe agree;
But where dwells thy father, my prettye Bessee?"

"My father," shee sayd, "is soone to be seene;
The seely blind beggar of Bednall-greene,
That daylye sits begging for charitïe,
He is the good father of prettye Bessee."

"His markes and his tokens are knowen very well;
He always is led with a dogg and a bell;
A seely olde man, God knoweth, is hee,
Yett hee is the father of prettye Bessee."

"Nay then," quoth the merchant, "thou art not for mee:"
"Nor," quoth the inholder, "my wiffe shalt thou bee:"
"I lothe," sayd the gentle, "a beggars degree,
And therfore, adewe, my prettye Bessee!"

"Why then," quoth the knight, "hap better or worse,
I weighe not true love by the weight of the pursse,
And bewtye is bewtye in every degree;
Then welcome unto mee, my prettye Bessee."

" With thee to thy father forthwith I will goe."
" Nay, soft," quoth his kinsmen, " it must not be soe ;
A poor beggars daughter noe ladye shal bee,
Then take thy adewe of prettye Bessee."

But soone after this, by breake of the day,
The knight had from Rumford stole Bessy away.
The yonge men of Rumford, as thicke as might bee,
Rode after to feitch againe prettye Bessee.

As swift as the winde to ryde they were seene,
Untill they came neare unto Bednall-greene ;
And as the knight lighted most curteouslìe,
They all fought against him for prettye Bessee.

But rescu came speedilye over the plaine,
Or else the yong knight for his love had beene slaine.
This fray being ended, then straightway he see
His kinsmen come rayling at prettye Bessee.

Then spake the blind beggar, "Althoughe I bee poore,
Yett rayle not against my child at my owne doore :
Though shee be not decked in velvett and pearle,
Yett I will dropp angells with you for my girle."

HARVEY, DEL. THOMPSON, SC.

The gentlemen then having dropt all their store,
Sayd, Now, beggar, hold, for wee have noe more.

" And then, if my gold may better her birthe,
And equall the gold that you lay on the earth,
Then neyther rayle nor grudge you to see
The blind beggars daughter a lady to bee."

"But first you shall promise, and have itt well knowne
The gold that you drop shall all be your owne."
With that they replyed, " Contented bee wee."
"Then here's," quoth the beggar, "for prettye Bessee.'

With that an angell he cast on the ground,
And dropped in angells full three thousand pound;
And oftentimes it was proved most plaine,
For the gentlemens one the beggar dropt twayne:

Soe that the place, wherein they did sitt,
With gold was covered every whitt.
The gentlemen then having dropt all their store,
Sayd, " Beggar, hold, for wee have no more:"

" Thou hast fulfilled thy promise aright."
" Then marry my girle," quoth he, to the knight;
" And heere," added hee, " I will throwe you downe
A hundred pounds more to buy her a gowne."

The gentlemen all, that this treasure had seene,
Admired the beggar of Bednall-greene:
And those, that were her suitors before,
Their fleshe for very anger they tore.

Thus was faire Bessy a match for the knight,
And made a ladye in others despite:
A fairer ladye there never was seene,
Than the blind beggars daughter of Bednall-greene.

But of their sumptuous marriage and feast,
What brave lords and knights thither were prest,
The Second Fit shall sett forth to your sight
With marveilous pleasure, and wished delight.

THE

BEGGAR'S DAUGHTER

OF

BEDNALL GREEN.

Part the Second.

Within a gorgeous palace most brave,
Adorned with all the cost they colde have,
This wedding was kept most sumptuouslie,
And all for the creditt of prettye Bessee.

All kind of dainties, and delicates sweete
Were bought for their banquet, as it was meete ;
Partridge, and plover, and venison most free,
Against the brave wedding of prettye Bessee.

This wedding through England was spread by report,
So that a great number therto did resort
Of nobles and gentles in every degree ;
And all for the fame of prettye Bessee.

To church then went this gallant yong knight ;
His bride followed after, an angell most bright,
With troopes of ladyes, the like nere was seene,
That went with sweete Bessy of Bednall-greene.

This marryage being solemnized then,
With musicke performed by the skillfullest men,
The nobles and gentles sate downe at that tyde,
Each one admiring the beautifull bryde.

Now, after the sumptuous dinner was done,
To talke, and to reason a number begunn :
They talkt of the blind beggar's daughter most bright,
And what with his daughter he gave to the knight.

HARVEY, DEL. S. WILLIAMS, SC.

A faire velvet capp, and a fether had hee,
And now a musicyan forsooth he wold bee.

Then spake the nobles, " Much marveil have wee,
This jolly blind beggar we cannot here see."
" My lords," quoth the bride, " my father's so base,
He is loth with his presence these states to disgrace."

" The prayse of a woman in questyon to bringe
Before her owne face, were a flattering thinge ;
Wee thinke thy father's baseness," quoth they,
" Might by thy bewtye be cleane put awaye."

They had no sooner these pleasant words spoke,
But in comes the beggar clad in a silke cloke ;
A faire velvet capp, and a fether had hee,
And now a musicyan forsooth hee wold bee.

He had a daintye lute under his arme,
He touched the strings, which made such a charme,
Saies " Please you to heare any musicke of mee,
Ile sing you a song of prettye Bessee."

With that his lute he twanged straightway,
And thereon begann most sweetlye to play ;
And after that lessons were playd two or three,
He strayned out this song most delicatelie :

"A poore beggars daughter did dwell on a greene,
Who for her fairenesse might well be a queene:
A blithe bonny lasse, and dainty was shee,
And many one called her prettye Bessee.

"Her father he had noe goods, nor noe land,
But beggd for a penny all day with his hand;
And yett to her marriage he gave thousands three,
And still he hath somewhat for prettye Bessee.

"And if any one here her birth doe disdaine,
Her father is ready, with might and with maine,
To prove shee is come of noble degree:
Therfore never flout at prettye Bessee."

With that the lords and the company round
With hearty laughter were readye to swound:
At last, sayd the lords, "Full well wee may see,
The bride and the beggar's beholden to thee."

On this the bride all blushing did rise,
The pearlie dropps standing within her faire eyes,
"O pardon my father, grave nobles," quoth shee,
"That throughe blind affection thus doteth on mee."

" If this be thy father," the nobles did say,
" Well may he be proud of this happy day ;
Yett by his countenance well may wee see,
His birth and his fortune did never agree :"

" And therfore blind man, we pray thee bewray,
(And looke that the truth thou to us doe say)
Thy birth and thy parentage, what it may bee,
For the love that thou bearest to prettye Bessee."

" Then give me leave, nobles and gentles, each one,
One song more to sing, and then I have done;
And if that itt may not winn good report,
Then do not give me a groat for my sport."

" Sir Simon de Montfort my subject shal bee ;
Once chiefe of all the great barons was hee,
Yet fortune so cruelle this lorde did abase,
Now loste and forgotten are hee and his race.

" When the barons in armes did King Henrye oppose,
Sir Simon de Montfort their leader they chose ;
A leader of courage undaunted was hee,
And oft-times hee made their enemyes flee.

" At length in the battle on Eveshame plaine,
The barons were routed, and Montfort was slaine;
Most fatall that battel did prove unto thee,
Thoughe thou wast not borne then, my prettye Bessee!

" Along with the nobles, that fell at that tyde,
His eldest sonne, Henrye, who fought by his side,
Was fellde by a blowe, he receivde in the fight!
A blowe that deprivde him for ever from sight.

" Among the dead bodyes all lifelesse he laye,
Till evening drewe on of the following daye,
When by a yong ladye discovered was hee;
And this was thy mother, my prettye Bessee!

" A barons faire daughter stept forth in the nighte
To search for her father, who fell in the fight;
And seeing yong Montfort, where gasping he laye,
Was moved with pitye, and brought him awaye.

" In secrette she nurst him, and swaged his paine,
While hee throughe the realme was beleevd to be slaine;
At lengthe his faire bride shee consented to bee,
And made him glad father of prettye Bessee.

HARVEY, DEL. T. WILLIAMS, SC.

With that the faire bride they all did embrace,
Saying, Sure thou art come of an honourable race.

" And nowe lest oure foes oure lives sholde betraye,
Wee clothed ourselves in beggars arraye ;
Her jewelles shee sold, and hither came wee :
All our comfort and care was our prettye Bessee.

" And here have wee lived in fortune's despite,
Thoughe mean, yet contented with humble delighte :
Thus many longe winters nowe have I beene
The sillye blinde beggar of Bednall-greene.

" And here, noble lordes, is ended the songe
Of one, that once to your owne ranke did belong :
And thus have you learned a secrette from mee,
That ne'er had beene knowne, but for prettye Bessee."

Now when the faire companye everye one,
Had heard the strange tale in the song he had showne,
They all were amazed, as well they might bee,
Both at the blind beggar, and prettye Bessee.

With that the sweete maiden they all did embrace,
Saying, " Sure thou art come of an honourable race,
Thy father likewise is of noble degree,
And thou art right worthye a ladye to bee."

Thus was the feast ended, with joye, and delighte,
A bridegroome most happye then was the yong knighte,
In joye and felicitie long lived hee,
All with his faire ladye, the prettye Bessee.

THE

CHILDREN IN THE WOOD:

WITH ENGRAVINGS

BY

THOMPSON, NESBIT, S. WILLIAMS, JACKSON,
AND BRANSTON AND WRIGHT;

DRAWN BY WILLIAM HARVEY.

LONDON:

JENNINGS AND CHAPLIN.

1831.

PREFACE.

No apology can be necessary for producing a reprint of so popular a Ballad as The Children in the Wood, the interest of which is destined to endure as long as pity itself, in the human, or in the Red-breast. In putting "these pretty babes" into fresh leaves, and helping to prevent such Flowers of the Forest from fading away, the Proprietors feel sure that they are doing a service to other "children young," by perpetuating a portion of that wholesome romance, which, like the bloom on the grape, clings with such loveliness and kindliness to the head and heart of youth. If the lover of art, in addition to the lover of nature, should derive a gratification from the reprint, through the character of the illustrations which accompany it, the highest aim will be answered—that of decking so fair a pall "with scutcheons meet and true, and handsome effigies."

The admirable Elia, in his Essays, makes mention of an old mansion-house in Norfolk, traditionally reported to have been the residence of the "cruel unkle;" and that, on a mantel, the whole story was carved in oak, "down to the Robin Red-breasts." This precious relic was afterwards removed by some "foolish rich person," to give place to one of more modern marble, of course, made "thick and slab;" and certainly the innovator deserved a souse, with his new shelf, into the Witches' Cauldron. Whether "the whole story, down to the Robin Red-breasts," cut in box, be worthy of a better fate, is now respectfully submitted. It appears, by the name, as if the story were destined to be perpetuated in its present form,—and that it could never be perfectly told, until the Babes were shewn, as Mr. Harvey has shewn them, to be the real Children in the *Wood*.

THE

CHILDREN IN THE WOOD.

Now ponder well, you parents deare,
These wordes, which I shall write;
A doleful story you shall heare,
In time brought forth to light:

A gentleman of good account,
In Norfolke dwelt of late,
Who did in honour far surmount
Most men of his estate.

Sore sicke he was, and like to dye,
No helpe his life could save;
His wife by him as sicke did lye,
And both possest one grave.

No love between these two was lost,
Each was to other kinde;
In love they liv'd, in love they dyed,
And left two babes behinde:

The one a fine and pretty boy,
Not passing three yeares olde;
The other a girl more young than he,
And fram'd in beautyes molde:

The father left his little son,
As plainly doth appeare,
When he to perfect age should come,
Three hundred poundes a yeare.

And to his little daughter Jane
Five hundred poundes in gold,
To be paid downe on marriage-day,
Which might not be controll'd;

But if the children chance to dye,
Ere they to age should come,
Their uncle should possesse their wealth,
For so the wille did run.

"Now, brother," said the dying man,
"Look to my children deare;
Be good unto my boy and girl,
No friendes else have they here:

To God and you I recommend
My children deare this daye,
But little while be sure we have
Within this world to staye.

You must be father and mother both,
And uncle all in one;
God knowes what will become of them,
When I am dead and gone."

With that bespake their mother deare:
"O brother kinde," quoth shee,
"You are the man must bring our babes
To wealth or miserie.

And if you keep them carefully,
Then God will you reward;
But if you otherwise should deal,
God will your deedes regard."

With lippes as cold as any stone
They kist their children small:
"God bless you both, my children deare;"
With that the teares did fall.


HARVEY DEL.

These speeches then their brother spake,
To this sicke couple there:
"The keeping of your children small,
Sweet sister, do not feare;

God never prosper me nor mine,
Nor aught else that I have,
If I do wrong your children deare,
When you are layd in grave."

The parents being dead and gone,
The children home he takes,
And brings them straite unto his house,
Where much of them he makes.

He had not kept these pretty babes
A twelvemonth and a daye,
But, for their wealth, he did devise
To make them both awaye.

He bargain'd with two ruffians strong,
Which were of furious mood,
That they should take these children young,
And slaye them in a wood:

And told his wife and all he had,
He did the children send
To be brought up in faire London,
With one that was his friend.

Away then went these pretty babes,
Rejoycing at that tide,
Rejoycing with a merry minde,
They should on cock-horse ride.

They prate and prattle pleasantly,
As they rode on the waye,
To those that should their butchers be,
And work their lives decaye.

So that the pretty speeche they had
Made murther's heart relent,
And they that undertooke the deed,
Full sore did now repent.

Yet one of them, more hard of heart,
Did vowe to do his charge,
Because the wretch, that hired him,
Had paid him very large.

The other won't agree thereto;
So here they fell to strife,
With one another they did fight,
About the children's life:

And he that was of mildest mood,
Did slaye the other there,
Within an unfrequented wood,
While babes did quake for feare.

He took the children by the hand,
Teares standing in their eye,
And bad them straitwaye follow him,
And look they did not crye:

And two long miles he ledd them on,
While they for bread complaine;
"Staye here," quoth he, "I'll bring you some,
When I come back againe."

These pretty babes, with hand in hand,
Went wandering up and downe;
But never more could see the man
Approaching from the town:

Their prettye lippes with black-berries,
Were all besmear'd and dyed,
And when they sawe the darksome night,
They sat them downe and cryed.

Thus wandered these two little babes,
Till deathe did end their grief,
In one another's armes they dyed,
As babes wanting relief:

No burial this pretty pair
Of ãny man receives,
Till Robin-red-breast painfully
Did cover them with leaves.

And now the heavy wrathe of God
Upon their uncle fell;
Yea, fearfull fiends did haunt his house,
His conscience felt an hell:

His barnes were fir'd, his goodes consum'd,
His landes were barren made,
His cattle dyed within the field,
And nothing with him stayd.

And in a voyage to Portugal,
Two of his sonnes did dye;
And to conclude, himselfe was brought
To want and miserye:

He pawn'd and mortgaged all his land
Ere seven yeares came about;
And now at length this wicked act
Did by this meanes come out:

The fellowe, that did take in hand
These children for to kill,
Was for a robbery judged to dye,
(Such was God's blessed will;)

Who did confess the very truth,
As here hath been display'd:
Their uncle having dyed in gaol,
Where he for debt was layd.


J. JACKSON Sc.

You that executors be made,
And overseers eke,
Of children that be fatherless,
And infants mild and meek;

Take you example by this thing,
And yield to each his right,
Lest God with such like miserye
Your wicked minds requite.

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